

THE CATHOLIC MIRROR

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Pope: Eucharist heals from idolatry of 'self'

By Junno Arocho Esteves
Catholic News Service

BUDAPEST, Hungary (CNS) -- Spending time in adoration of the Blessed Sacrament can heal Christians from a self-absorbed religiosity that is ostentatious and triumphalist, Pope Francis said.

Presiding over the closing Mass of the International Eucharistic Congress Sept. 12, the pope urged people to make time for Eucharistic adoration.

"Let us allow Jesus, the living bread, to heal us of our self-absorption, open our hearts to self-giving, liberate us from our rigidity and self-concern, free us from the paralyzing slavery of defending our image, and inspire us to follow him wherever he would lead us," he said.

Landing in Budapest, the pope was welcomed by Hungarian Deputy Prime Minister Zsolt Semjén. He then made his way to the Museum of Fine Arts near the site of the closing Mass of the International Eucharistic Congress.

The Vatican said Pope Francis met privately with Hungarian President János Áder,

Continued on page 14

Family faith formation empowers parents



Photo supplied by Rhonda Buck

Families work together on a faith project at St. Michael Parish in Harlan. More parishes are moving to a family-based formation program.

By Kelly Mescher Collins
Staff Writer

Kathleen Klein was thrilled to hear about the new Family Faith Formation program at her parish, Sacred Heart in West Des Moines.

"I am really excited

about this new style because it really allows the parents and the parish to work together," said Klein, mother to third grader Danny and sixth grader Kennedy. "I love that the parents take on a deeper role, but that we have the church as a guide to help facilitate that."

Chris Corrice is the co-

ordinator of Family Formation at Sacred Heart.

"The guiding principle behind everything we do at the parish is to equip families as the first educators in the faith," he said.

This new format replaces the widely used model of parents dropping off their kids

and picking them up an hour or two later.

With the Family Faith Formation approach, the families gather at the parish once a month. Parents meet separately while the kids meet with their

Continued on page 5

Woman's last gift brings joy to youth

By Anne Marie Cox
Staff Writer

Jeanine Rothermel never met Cooper Myers, but she brought joy to his life nonetheless.

Cooper, a 13-year-old from West Des Moines who is deaf, was able to attend his first Catholic Youth Camp thanks in part to sign language interpreters and an assistant funded through Rothermel's estate.

He loved every minute of camp.

"As a parent, it brings tears to my eyes," said Cooper's mom, Molly, herself a former CYC counselor. "You just want your kids to have every opportunity that they can to grow and CYC is just great. Not only was it their first time away from home (Cooper went with his brother, Max) but in a loving atmosphere that puts Christ at the center. I just really wanted him to experience that."



Photo supplied by Molly Myers

Cooper Myers was able to enjoy Catholic Youth Camp thanks to a gift from the late Jeanine Rothermel. Pictured with him is Carson Gregory, who became a best buddy to Cooper.

He was able to go to camp because of Rothermel. She was a parishioner of Holy Trinity Parish in Des Moines who also was profoundly hearing impaired.

Born in 1930, she

learned to lip read and went to the School for Deaf after graduating from high school in Des Moines. Her lip reading skills offered her the chance to pick up secretarial

Continued on page 4

Couple's generosity benefits families seeking Catholic education

By Anne Marie Cox &
Maureen Kenney

Over the last 23 years, more than three quarters of a million dollars have helped pay tuition for needy families in the Diocese of Des Moines who wanted a Catholic education for their children.

This academic year, six schools will receive up to \$10,000 each from the Florida-based Kremer Foundation to help children.

"Some people think \$10,000 is a drop in the bucket but that's a lifetime of difference to families and kids," said St. Anthony School Principal Jennifer Raes.

The generosity comes from the George and Mary Kremer Foundation of Florida.

George came from wealth. He was born in New York City and fondly remembered the religious women who educated

him. His wife, Mary, grew up in a devout Catholic family of modest means in Ohio. Her family made Catholic education a priority.

A creator of the first semi-permanent hair dye, George sold his company, Roux, in the late 1970s to Revlon, an international company.

The Kremers used their wealth to take care of everyone in their family, and then thought about how to use the rest of it.

"Mr. Kremer always felt it was a disservice to leave an immense amount of money to anybody," said Mary Goddard, of the foundation.

The Kremers met Franciscan Sister Trinita Balbach, principal of a local Catholic school in the 1980s. The couple toured her convent and school and wanted to buy the sisters mattresses, new blinds for their windows and a dishwasher.

Sister Trinita objected,

Continued on page 8

Visioning with the eyes of the heart

Faith practiced without a heart wholly turned toward God in a radical manner so that all our initiatives are prompted and oriented by his Spirit, is like cycling without a chain: one might be able to coast for a while, but at some point, one will lose steam and hit the wall. In a biblical sense, the heart is more than the seat of emotions and passions; the heart is the center of one's whole being. It is the place where God can encounter and enliven us so that all we do follows from this abiding partnership.

God ignites our desire to be good for one another, so that our love for God, neighbor and self are more seamlessly united. We step up to take responsibility for our share in God's promise, God's own vision of what life in community, including the community of the Church that is the Diocese of Des Moines, can be.

God gives us his own Son to save us. We gladly receive him as the Incarnate Word who charts our direction and relieves us of the need to enter into every situation as though we've been handed a blank slate. God speaks his love language to us in personal prayer, in communal celebration of the sacraments, and in our service rendered to others. Jesus refreshes our baptismal calling so that we translate the gifts he showers upon us into ground-level patterns of relating that are meant to draw everyone into communion with the heart of Christ.

Jesus knows we are capable of more love; he calls us to be more bold, more prophetic, more visionary by discerning with what St. Paul calls "the eyes of the heart" (Ephesians 1:18) how we might embody Jesus' presence in an even more compelling, attractive way. We live



By
Bishop
William
Joensen

for God in a world that too readily, too fearfully defaults to living solely for itself.

This past Aug. 29, at All Saints Parish in Stuart, Iowa, after months of preparatory discussion and prayer, something significant in the life of our Diocese was more formally set in motion: a group of 21 people from our Diocese representing diverse parishes, ages, ethnic and racial affiliations, professional backgrounds and personal perspectives came together to embark on what we intend to be a Spirit-led process of strategic visioning for our local church over this next year and beyond. More details were in the July edition of The Catholic Mirror (<https://www.dmdiocese.org/news/news-diocese-launches-strategic-visioning-process>).

This visioning steering group is composed of more lay women than men, and is joined by two priests, one deacon couple and supporting staff members from the diocesan pastoral center. All of them have prayerfully said "yes" to the invitation to participate, and I am grateful to all of them for their generous willingness to commit themselves to this process, including co-chairs María Gabriela Matamoros of St. Boniface Parish, Waukee, and Dan Kinsella of St. Patrick Parish, Imogene.

We have engaged Dan Ebener of St. Ambrose University in Davenport, a man of deep Catholic faith with vast experience facilitating visioning processes for both non-profit and corporate organizations, and a noted author in the area of organizational leadership, to help facilitate our journey forward. I have been impressed with Dan's docility to the Spirit in setting forth a dynamic process that will unfold in three phases:

(1) Phase One research and formational phase through December of this year. This phase will involve one-on-one interviews with various constituents, and then will be extended

into a series of more than 30 focus group listening sessions (conducted mainly via Zoom) that will include parishioners representing our entire diocesan family as well as persons involved in our mission of education and faith formation. We will also seek to engage persons who no longer identify with the Catholic Church, who are inactive or who may have disaffiliated for whatever reason, as well as gain perspectives from leaders in our larger communities and other faith traditions.

(2) The Phase Two planning phase from January through April 2022 will draw together the results of the research phase and allow the strategic visioning steering committee to incorporate their own formative experiences and reflections. They will develop strategies and goals that will translate into actions steps that compose the scope and substance of the Strategic Vision. The articulated Vision will be subject to final review and revision through the Easter Season culminating in the Feast of Pentecost. If all goes as planned,

(3) Phase Three implementation phase of the Strategic Vision will begin as early as July 1, 2022, and will continue for two-three years and beyond.

It should go without saying that I will be keenly engaged and involved throughout this process. I approach my second anniversary as your bishop at the end of September, and have been privileged during more recent months of the pandemic to finally engage many of you in



Photo by John Gaffney

Dan Ebener, of St. Ambrose University in Davenport, is facilitating the strategic visioning process for the Diocese of Des Moines.

person throughout the Diocese. I have some intuitions and hopes for the form of the vision that will emerge from this process. Yet I humbly recognize that if I were to prescribe beforehand the major features of the vision I would risk becoming a sort of self-appointed Pharisee who thinks he has God's ways all figured out by himself.

We all have our respective senses of what it means to be a disciple of Jesus and a member of Christ's body in these remarkable times; unless we are humble enough to mingle our personal visions together and patiently place ourselves under the tutelage of the Spirit, cultivating trust and the willingness to speak from our hearts to one another, we'll be wasting our time. And none of us wants that.

Exciting and yes, demanding, possibilities are before us, thanks to the God who never gives up on us. God wants no person, no capacity to receive the Spirit-infused Word who is his Son, to go to waste. Together, united in heart and mind, I hope we may be inspired, discerning, and ever poised to support this initiative by prayer and any opportunity given to participate. God's Kingdom vision presses on, calling us to assist him in bringing forth communion where love is exchanged, and life flows uphill and downhill with the pulse of Spirit propelling us. We keep true faith with Christ and one another, with hearts that see what God wants us to see, so that we can go where God wants us to go.



Photo by John Gaffney

Twenty one people from the Diocese representing diverse parishes, ages, ethnic and racial affiliations, professional backgrounds and personal perspectives came together to begin a strategic visioning process.

Visión con los Ojos del Corazón

La fe que se practica sin un corazón volteando plenamente hacia Dios de una forma radical de modo que todas nuestras iniciativas se originen y se guíen por su Espíritu, es como andar en bicicleta sin cadena: uno puede avanzar un poco per llegaremos al punto en que perdamos toda nuestra energía y paremos en seco. En un sentido bíblico, el corazón es más que el conjunto de emociones y pasiones; el corazón es el centro mismo de nuestro ser. Es el lugar en donde Dios pueden encontrarnos y animarnos para que todo lo que hagamos surja de esta permanente colaboración.

Dios enciende nuestro deseo de ser buenos unos con

otros, para que nuestro amor por Dios, por el prójimo y por nosotros mismo estén en una más perfecta unión. Tomamos parte en nuestra responsabilidad en la promesa de Dios, la visión misma de Dios de lo que puede ser la vida en comunidad, incluyendo a la comunidad de la Iglesia que es la Diócesis de Des Moines.

Dios nos entrega a su propio Hijo para salvarnos. Nosotros le recibimos con gusto como el Verbo Encarnado que marca nuestro rumbo y nos libera de la necesidad de enfrentar toda situación como si estuviéramos

Continued on page3

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Official

Bishop William Joensen has made the following appointment effective Aug. 26, 2021.

Rev. Augustine Clement Owusu, from parochial vicar, St. Joseph Parish, Earling; St. Peter Parish, Defiance; St. Michael Parish, Harlan; to canonical administrator of St. Michael Parish, Harlan; St. Joseph Parish, Earling; St. Peter Parish Defiance; and of Shelby County Catholic School.

William Joensen

Faithfully in Christ,
Most Rev. William Joensen, Ph.D.
Bishop

Jason Kurth

Jason Kurth
Chancellor

Visión con los Ojos del Corazón

Continued from page 1

empezando de nuevo. Dios habla en su lenguaje de amor con nosotros en la oración personal, en la celebración comunitaria de los sacramentos, y en el servicio que damos a los demás. Jesús renueva nuestro llamado bautismal para que podamos convertir los dones que él nos concede en patrones generales de relaciones en donde busquemos atraer a todos a una comunión con el corazón de Cristo.

Jesús sabe que somos capaces de amar más; él nos llama a ser más audaces, más proféticos, más visionarios al discernir los que San Pablo llama “los ojos del corazón” (Efesios 1:18) sobre el cómo podemos incorporar la presencia de Jesús de una forma más convincente y atractiva. Vivimos por Dios en un mundo que está demasiado temeroso y listo para caer en la rutina de vivir para sí mismo.

Este pasado 29 de agosto, en la parroquia de All Saints, en Stuart, Iowa, luego de meses de preparación en discusiones y oración, se puso más formalmente en camino algo significativo en la vida de nuestra Diócesis: se reunió un grupo de 21 personas de nuestras Diócesis representando diversas parroquias, edades, afiliaciones étnicas y raciales, antecedentes profesionales y perspectivas personales para iniciar lo que buscamos que sea un proceso de visión estratégica guiado por el Espíritu para nuestra iglesia local durante este año y más allá. Más detalles en la edición de julio de Catholic Mirror (<https://www.dmdiocese.org/news/news-diocese-launches-strategic-visioning-process>).

Hemos involucrado a Dan Ebener de la Universidad de St. Ambrose en Davenport, un hombre de profunda fe católica con amplia experiencia en facilitar procesos de visión para organizaciones tanto corporativas como sin fines de lucro, y un reconocido autor en el área de liderazgo organizacional, para que nos ayude a facilitar nuestro camino en el futuro. Me ha impresionado

lo sumisión al espíritu de Dan al establecer un proceso dinámico que se desarrollará en tres fases: (1) Fase Uno es la fase de investigación y de formación hasta diciembre de este año. Esta fase consistirá en entrevistas uno a uno con varios miembros, y luego se extenderá a más de 30 sesiones de escucha en grupos de enfoque (que se llevarán a cabo principalmente vía Zoom) que incluirá a miembros de las parroquias que representen a toda nuestra familia diocesana, así como personas involucradas en nuestra misión de educación y formación de fe. También buscaremos involucrar a personas que ya no se identifican con la Iglesia Católica, quienes están inactivos o quienes se han alejado por cualquiera razón, así como obtener perspectivas de líderes de nuestra comunidad en general y de otras tradiciones de fe.

(2) La Fase Dos, fase de planeación de enero a abril del 2022 juntará los resultados de la fase de investigación y permitirá al comité de dirección de visión estrategia para incorporar sus propias experiencias y reflexiones formativas. Ellos desarrollarán estrategias y metas que se traducirán en pasos a tomar que formarán la perspectiva y la sustancia de la Visión Estratégica. La Visión articulada estará sujeta a un análisis y a una revisión final durante la temporada de Pascua, culminando con la Fiesta de Pentecostés. Si todo sale como lo planeamos, (3) Fase Tres, la fase de implementación de la Visión Estratégica comenzará tan pronto como el 1 de julio del 2022, y continuará por dos o tres años y más.

No es necesario decirlo que estaré plenamente conectado e involucrado durante este proceso. Me acerco a mi segundo aniversario como su obispo a fines de septiembre, y he tenido el privilegio en estos últimos meses de la pandemia de finalmente poder encontrarme con

Continued on page 15

Memorial Garden for the Unborn under construction



Photos by Kelly Mescher Collins

By Kelly Mescher Collins
Staff Writer

St. John Parish in Adel will soon welcome the entire community to enjoy the Memorial Garden for the Unborn.

The garden was “purely a work of the Holy Spirit,” sponsored by the parish’s Respect Life Committee and Knights of Columbus, said Chris Oberreuter, committee chair and knight.

The \$17,000 project will include a nearly six-foot tall monument engraved with the words: “In loving memory of the children we were never able to hold.” The bottom of the monument will feature the Scripture passage, Jeremiah 1:5: “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before

you were born I dedicated you...”

“People don’t know what to do when they have a miscarriage,” Oberreuter said. “So we wanted to give a resting place.”

The Memorial Garden for the Unborn will be situated behind an existing Mary Garden on the north side of the church. The Knights of Columbus raised money to build a new rosary walking path around the Mary Garden, leading to the Memorial Garden for the Unborn.

A portion of the memorial garden will be filled with stones. Individuals and families are welcome to write or engrave the name of a child on the stone and then place it in the rock garden as part of the memorial. The garden will also include a shade

tree and benches.

“Then they know they have a place they can visit,” Oberreuter said. “[The vision] was to bring parents, grandparents and individuals together, bring them closer to God and lift them and their babies to God.”

Jeanne O’Connor, a member of the Respect Life Committee and St. John Parish, said the garden was created for the entire community – not just for the church and its parishioners.

“It’s for anybody that would like to utilize the garden and find peace,” O’Connor said.

The committee hopes people find the garden to be a place of comfort, peace, quiet and reflection. Bishop William Joensen will bless the garden on Sunday, Oct. 10.

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Dr. Josiah Fitzsimmons



Through her bequest, woman brings joy to youth

Continued from page 1

skills and she worked as an administrative assistant in the insurance industry for decades.

Rothermel died in 2020. Through her estate, she left gifts to her parish, Catholic Charities, St. Vincent de Paul, St. Joseph Educational Center and the Diocese of Des Moines' Deaf Ministry.

Her gift to Deaf Ministry paid for interpreters and an assistant for Cooper. It also benefited others through a ripple effect.

Campers accepted Cooper, included him and extended supportive camaraderie that reflects the Christ-like environment of CYC, said Alex Kautzky, executive director of the St. Thomas More Center, home of CYC.

Some kids asked their parents if they could learn sign language, said Molly.

And the college sophomore who provided assistance to Cooper at camp said working with the teenager was the most profound thing that's ever happened to him.

Carson Gregory, who was studying at Loras College to be a lawyer, has changed his life's goal.

"After working with Cooper and living with the experience that that entailed, I felt

called to change my life," he said. "I decided to transfer schools to study neuroscience and disability studies. Hopefully, one day I will work in health care with people who have a disability."

Though Gregory was an aide, he became much more to Cooper. They developed a tight-knit bond, said Molly. They became more like "best buddies."

The diocese's Deaf Ministry program also allowed for Cooper to have a sign language interpreter at Vacation Bible School.

The Diocese will continue to focus on needs within the deaf community so others may benefit from Rothermel's gift, said John Gaffney, diocesan director of Evangelization and Catechesis.

Through various estate plan options, individuals or families can leave a lasting legacy of helping others. To learn more, contact the Catholic Foundation of Southwest Iowa at 515-237-5044 or email contact@cfswia.org.



Jeanine Rothermel



Photo provided by Catholic Youth Camp

Jeanine Rothermel left a legacy of helping others through her will. She left funds for the Diocese's Deaf Ministry program, which provided support for Cooper Myers to go to Catholic Youth Camp for the first time with sign language interpreters and a helper. Pictured above, he stands to the side while playing a popular game called gaga ball.

Parish celebrates its 10th anniversary with Mass, Eucharistic procession



Corpus Christi Parish celebrated its 10th anniversary on July 11. The parish celebrated with Mass and a Eucharistic procession.

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Family faith formation empowers parents



St. Ambrose Cathedral Parish just began a family-based religious education process. Here, youth enjoy the first gathering.



Father Litto Thomas joins the kids in outdoor activities at their first Family Faith Formation gathering on Sept. 9 at Sacred Heart Parish in West Des Moines.

Continued from page 1

catechists. The next three weeks the family gathers for religious education in their home.

“[Parents] – you’re the primary educators for the children,” Corrice said. “We want to parent *with* you – all of us work together.”

This year’s teachings will be based on the Bible, with each month having a theme and Scripture passages for reflection. Some week’s lessons include activities and games. The parish will be offering Family Faith Formation in both English and Spanish.

Corrice is excited about the new Bibles the parish has purchased to accompany the faith formation.

“It’s one of the more deluxe Bibles – it’s really nice. I think it sends the message: ‘We really believe in you and we want you to have a really great Bible,’” said Corrice. It includes reading plans, stickers and other features. “It’s got everything you could ever want.”

This new approach is a great opportunity for not just the family, but the entire community, Klein said.

“I love that it allows the community to come together as one,” she said. “So the Catholic school kids and the public school kids come together – no matter their school and no matter their background.”

Klein hopes these positive interactions result in more engagement and interaction

amongst families at events and before and after Mass.

St. Mary Parish in Red Oak and St. Michael Parish in Harlan have been using the Family Faith Formation approach for over a year.

Some parents had reservations at first.

“There is a learning curve,” said Alan Vonnahme, director of religious education at St. Mary Parish. “A lot of parents do not feel like they are qualified or know enough.”

Vonnahme assures parents that he and the volunteers are there to help parents with any questions they might have.

“It’s a cultural shift,” Vonnahme said. “We’re putting the responsibility more on the parents.”

Rhonda Buck, director of Faith Formation at St. Michael Parish in Harlan, said many parents feel intimidated and are reluctant to become the primary teacher – feeling they do not know enough.

“A lot of parents feel awkward and uncomfortable,” Buck said. “But God doesn’t expect perfect – he expects participation. Just say a little prayer to the Holy Spirit and you will be amazed that he will [come through].”

Learning styles vary from person to person, so Buck provides families with a variety of tools and resources, including information packets, YouTube videos, an activity or craft, inspiring songs and more.

“We’ve all made that

pep talk [to parents] – ‘You can do this. I’m here for you,’” Buck added. “I’m supplementing you – you aren’t supplementing me.”

Being back together for their once a month gatherings after COVID-19 has been positive.

“They’re really enjoying that,” Buck said. “Everybody seems to respond really well to having the whole family together.”

But the weekly lessons in the home are just as vital.

“It gives you the opportunity to take the time and focus on family and focus on faith,” Buck concluded. “And I think that’s something the whole world could use a lot more of these days.”

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Victim Assistance Advocate

The diocese's Victim Assistance Advocate is a staff member at Polk County Victim Services. He helps victims of abuse of minors by clergy through a complaint process and in seeking support and counseling services. He can be reached at 515-286-2024 or Sam.Porter@polkcountyia.gov.

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Around the Diocese

Sept. 19 Sunday 50th anniversary celebration

DES MOINES -- You are invited to a celebration of the 50th anniversary for Father Bob Aubrey at St. Joseph Church in Des Moines. There will be an open house from 2-4 p.m. with Evening Prayer at 4:15 p.m.

Sept. 19-21 Sunday-Tuesday Parish Mission

ADEL -- All are welcome to join us for St. John's Parish Mission "To The Heights!" with Katie Patrizio. Come hear this fast-paced retelling of the Scripture story and discover your unique role in salvation history. Learn more about our presenter at katiepatrizio.com. The schedule is: Sept. 19 - 5:30 p.m. dinner & speaker; Sept. 20 - 6:30 p.m. speaker & reflection; Sept. 21 - 5:30 p.m. Mass, fellowship, speaker & adoration at St. John Church in Adel.

Sept. 25 Saturday Memorial Mass for the Unborn

DES MOINES -- A memo-

rial Mass for all the lives lost through the violence of abortion will be held at noon at the Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel & Divine Mercy, just north of St. Anthony Church. Chairs will be set up, but feel free to bring your lawn chair in case seating is full. For more information contact Tom Hanson, tehanson4@msn.com, 515-770-7648.

St. Vincent de Paul "Friends of the Poor Walk"

CARLISLE -- This walk will take place from 9-11 a.m. on Scotch Ridge Nature Trail. Money raised helps others & stays local. For more information go to www.fopwalk.org/event/2603

Sept. 26 Sunday Chicken and Ham dinner

LENOX -- St. Patrick Church is hosting its annual grilled chicken and ham dinner from 11 a.m. - 1 p.m. in its parish center. Prices are \$10/adults; \$5/ages 5 - 12; under 5 is free. Dine in, carry out, or home delivery in Lenox. Pre ticket sales at Lenox Family Hardware or the

church. For home delivery call 641-333-2565 starting at 10:45 a.m.

Sept. 30 Thursday Day of Prayer

DES MOINES -- Knights of Columbus Council 10980 is sponsoring a second annual Day of Prayer at St. Joseph Catholic Church. In 1861, during the Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln called for a National Day of Prayer at a time when our nation was in need of healing. Our country faces many challenges today which can only be overcome with God's help. Come join us for our second annual day of prayer and fasting. Schedule is as follows: 7 a.m. Church opens for individual prayer; 9 a.m. - 6:15 p.m. Eucharistic adoration of the Blessed Sacrament; 5:30 - 6:45 p.m. Reconciliation; 6:15-6:30 p.m. Benediction, 6:30-7 p.m.; Rosary; 7 p.m. Mass

Oct. 3 Sunday Umeri Concert

DES MOINES -- Umeri, Drake University's alumni choir, will

present "Music of Compassion and Consolation," a concert of sacred music, at 3 p.m., at St. Ambrose Cathedral. The performance, conducted by Aimee Beckmann-Collier, will feature the Durufle *Requiem*, as well as music by young American composers. Members of the Des Moines Symphony will join the choir in performing the *Requiem*, a piece that incorporates both Gregorian chant and modern harmonies. There is no admission charge; a free-will offering will be taken. For further information, see <https://umeri.wp.drake.edu>

Oct. 10 Sunday Oktoberfest

COUNCIL BLUFFS -- St. Peter Parish is holding its Oktoberfest at St. Albert High School from 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. Cost is \$12/adults and \$5/children under 12. Featuring: sauerbraten, bratwurst with sauerkraut, noodles with buttered crumbs and more. Tickets for a chance to win a Ford Mustang Convertible are \$10. For more information contact the parish at 712-322-8889.

Harvest Festival

HARLAN -- St. Michael's Harvest Festival drive-through dinner is from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Rosman Parish Center. The event features Staley's chicken with a free-will donation.

Oct. 23 Saturday Big Band Event

NORWALK - St. John the Apostle Parish is hosting the High Society Big Band playing the songs of Duke Ellington, Les Brown, Tommy Dorsey, Glenn Miller and many more. Event starts at 6:15 p.m. (immediately following the 5 p.m. Saturday Mass) and ends at 9:15 p.m. Each table will be provided an appetizer tray with pizza, wine, beer and non-alcoholic beverages available for purchase. Pre-event tickets are \$75 for a reserved table of 8, \$10 single ticket or \$12 at the door. Call the parish at 515-981-4855 or stop by the parish office to purchase your tickets and reserve your seats.

Video club gives students hands-on learning

By Anne Marie Cox
Staff Writer

As students carried their chairs into the gym at St. Malachy School in Creston for the first Mass of the school year, students Owen Weis and Ayden Purdum sat in the back looking at computer screens that showed sound and video.

Student Kurtis Bradley stood at the far corner with an iPhone in a gimbal that stabilizes video.

Students Jaxson Jondle and Matthew Rudolf were on either sides of the room with iPhones in tripods, waiting for the action to begin.

Father Adam Westphal began to celebrate Mass, and the video crew of seventh and eighth graders sprung into action. Caden Simmons moved his camera in place by the center aisle. The cameramen made sure the video they were shooting was in focus and close enough to capture what was happening, yet far enough away to respect the celebration of the liturgy.

This collection of budding videographers and video editors is an outgrowth of the pandemic.

"It grew from such a tiny seed of an idea into a great club that our students love," said Principal Jennifer Simmons.

When the pandemic began, retired computer scientist Steve Heffern, who remembers the days of cutting 8mm film, offered to help Father Westphal, who was recording and posting Sunday Mass.

Heffern grew his skillset over the summer.

Months later, when class resumed, they realized that only two classrooms could fit in the gym while social distancing. The other students would need to watch livestreamed Mass from their classrooms.

Heffern hauled his own



Photo by Anne Marie Cox

Eighth grader Caden Simmons helps livestream a Mass at St. Malachy School in Creston.

equipment to the school to livestream the Mass, and Simmons asked if the students could help. The video club was born.

"They picked it up quickly," he said.

After doing several projects, the club was asked if it would record or stream the high school musical.

"The cool thing this year is we have a kid who has been doing it for a year and is interested in editing," Heffern said. "Maybe he'll get other kids interested in editing."

"I like technology," said student Owen Weis. "It's a little hard but you get used to it."

When the students first started the video club, they'd done some videos on their own with their phones, but they hadn't worked as a team.

"They know what

they're supposed to do, they know what's expected of them and they know what the other people on the crew are doing," Heffern said. "That team building thing is very important."

In addition to learning technology skills and teamwork, the students are learning a little bit of math, too. At their meetings, Heffern talks about bytes and the difference between a 4G and a 35G file, raw images versus mp4 and more.

"I'm busier now than I've ever been," he said of his retirement. "I'm very enthusiastic about this. It's incredibly fun to do."

Heffern isn't the only one having fun.

"It was a new opportunity, maybe a career path I could choose," Ayden Purdum said. "It makes things fun."



Photo by Anne Marie Cox

Retired computer scientist Steve Heffern teaches students how to capture video and sound to livestream a Mass. With him are students Ayden Purdum and Owen Weis.

Longtime advocate retiring from abuse program

By Anne Marie Cox
Staff Writer

Diane McKee, a longtime advocate for domestic violence, sexual assault and human trafficking survivors in the Council Bluffs region, is retiring from Catholic Charities at the end of the year.

Her right hand helper, Sapana Sharma said, "I'm still in denial."

"We're all in denial," said Laura Hessburg, public policy director for the Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence.

They wish McKee well in retirement, though they'll miss her calm and steady strength combined with a nonjudgmental approach to the difficult work of helping those traumatized by violent crime.

McKee's gifts will be missed.

"Diane really embodied a shared value for concern for the well-being of people and she brought that to her work," Hessburg said.

McKee's involvement in Catholic Charities began as a volunteer.

She was teaching junior high reading in 1987.

"I had been doing that for a couple of years and decided that's not really where my passion was," she said.

She volunteered for Catholic Charities domestic violence and sexual assault program in Council Bluffs. She would go to the hospital and take sexual assault or domestic violence victims to a Catholic Charities shelter.

In 1989, she joined the staff; it was just her and one other person.

In the mid-1990s, more federal dollars for crime victims began to come to the program, and more staff was hired.

McKee, now the program manager, learned all aspects of victim services. She's been a direct service worker, a volunteer coordinator, court advocate and more. It's hard work.

"In those early days, I had some put-my-head-down-on-my-desk-and-cry days," she said.

In 1999, a fire destroyed a home used as a shelter for abuse victims. McKee rallied the community, applied for grants and helped lead a capital campaign that resulted in the construction of a new shelter and office space, opened in 2002, that can accommodate up to eight families with 24 beds and staff. Staff at the domestic violence and sexual assault program were brought together under one roof, formerly known as the Phoenix House. They provide a 24-hour emergency shelter and crisis phone line, court advocacy, educational groups and outreach to under-served populations in nine counties surrounding Council Bluffs in southwest Iowa.

In 2013, Iowa regionalized victim services and created a competitive grant process to help fund services. Catholic Charities was awarded grant money for its region and expanded services.

McKee's counterpart at

the Crisis Intervention and Advocacy Center, based in Adel and serving 10 counties, appreciates her friend's collaborative spirit.

"In 2013, Diane and I were both writing massive grants at the same time and there was a winter storm. We were trying to bring our grants together to make sure they were encompassing the entire 19 counties that our two agencies serve together," said Johna Sullivan. "We were burning the midnight oil, texting and emailing back and forth, sharing narratives from our grants. It was a huge collaboration between our two agencies to come together and write this grant."

The latest expansion of services assists victims of human trafficking and offers education in the community. Catholic Charities now employs 30 people in the domestic violence and sexual assault program.

"The growth has been exponential," said Sharma, a close friend and assistant program manager. "I think it's Diane. She's a visionary. She's up for the challenges."

From Council Bluffs to the state Capitol, McKee took what she learned from survivors to advocate for change for the common good in her community and beyond.

"When I first met her I thought she was an attorney," Hessburg said. "She was just razor smart when she was at the Capitol connecting what she and her staff did with survivors and policies. She brought that reality to her work and always made it about those shared values."

"Diane is very, very committed to the well-being of sexual assault survivors," said Beth Barnhill, executive director of the Iowa Coalition Against Sexual Assault.

She described McKee as an anchor, a steady presence.

"She's been able to very calmly and carefully talk to people. She has a quiet way of doing important work," Barnhill said.

McKee is known for her patience.

"There were times I've just sat here and thought, 'Oh my gosh, I would not have the patience she does right now with what is going on,'" said Teresa Hensley, a longtime financial assistant for the program.

She's also known for her hands-on approach.

"She's always been our maintenance person, too," Hensley said. "During COVID, she was replacing ceiling tiles. She was covering shifts on weekends. We all try to pitch in but, right now she's trying to unplug the kitchen sink without calling a plumber. She's always trying to save us a buck!"

McKee is hard working and professional, but also fun.

One day a meeting was



Diane McKee



Diane McKee, program manager for Catholic Charities Domestic Violence & Sexual Assault program in Council Bluffs, cuts the ribbon at the shelter after a renovation.

occurring on the first floor. People had arrived and they were waiting for McKee.

"I went upstairs to find her and there she is rolling on the ground with the kids," Sharma said. "That's how Diane is. Or, out of nowhere you would hear Diane just busting out an old song down the corridor. She hears something, she'll start singing. That is so much like her."

What motivates McKee is the impact one person can have on another. Her staff's outreach can change the trajectory of a victim's life. They focus not just on the emergency at hand, but on how they can help victims achieve their goals for the future.

"This job was not her

only job but it was a mission for sure and she believes in the cause," Sharma said. "She's always thinking about how to make it better for survivors."

Deb Debbaut, director of grants programs for Iowa West Foundation, described McKee as key to collaboration among agencies in the community.

"She definitely in Council Bluffs is perceived to be the cornerstone and the representative of Catholic services," Debbaut said. "She always steps forward to collaborate and provide information and services to our community. She's always thinking about how to make life better for others."

Barbara Decker, exec-

utive director of Catholic Charities, praised McKee's leadership.

"Diane is an exceptional leader and a passionate advocate in helping others in need," she said. "We will miss Diane: her positive outlook, her diligence, and strong work ethic. We wish her well and extend deep gratitude for her many contributions to Catholic Charities and communities for a job well-done!"

McKee is retiring at the end of the year and is looking forward to more time for backpacking, hiking, running and maybe a little more traveling.

Hessburg said: "She's just one of those people who are too good to be true."



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WHAT: "Is Vatican II Really the gift, the grace, and the word of the Holy Spirit for the Church of our time?"

WHO: Professor Douglas Bushman is Director of Formation and Mission at the Church of St. Joseph in West St. Paul, MN. For 30 years he taught graduate theology courses on New Evangelization, Catholic Spirituality, Vatican II, Pastoral Theology, and St. John Paul II. He is the past Executive Vice President for Mission at Relevant Radio, serves on the board of ProLife Across America, and contributed to the English translation of the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

WHERE: Sacred Heart Parish Center in West Des Moines, sponsored by Iowa Catholic Radio.

WHEN: October 7th at 6 p.m.

COST: Suggested \$5.00 at the door.



www.IowaCatholicRadio.com

Back to school



Kevin Ramos Viera, a sophomore at St. Albert Catholic School in Council Bluffs, studies cells in biology.



Photo by Kelly Mescher Collins
St. Theresa School seventh graders Jude Gross and Zak Gai return to school in Des Moines.



Bishop William Joensen visited students at St. Luke the Evangelist Catholic School in Ankeny, which just completed a new building addition.

Strengthening the domestic church conference



Hispanic parents attend a conference Aug. 28 offered by the Diocese: "Strengthening the Domestic Church."
Photo by Mayra Moriel de Banuelos

Couple's estate has been helping Des Moines students for 23 years

Continued from page 1

saying she had six sisters who could wash dishes. What she really needed was help for kids who weren't sure they'd be returning to school the following year because of the cost of tuition.

"He wrote out a check," Goddard said. "That sort of planted the seed of what he could do with his money."

The Kremers and Sister Trinita picked five schools and gave them \$4,000 each for a few years.

"It worked so well that we decided to go further," Goddard said. By the time George died in 1997, he was giving 54 schools money to help children with tuition.

"I don't think at that time he ever realized the reach he was going to have," Goddard said.

When George died, he put half of his estate in the foundation, which invested the funds and expanded the number of schools and students, particularly in the Great Lakes region and the Midwest.

"Those were areas where our money got the most bang for its buck, meaning the tuitions were most reasonable," Goddard said. The foundation helps students in small to medium size schools where tuition rates are about \$5,000 or less and have a large percentage of children that come from financially challenged families.

Twenty three years ago, former St. Anthony School Principal Joe Cordaro saw a

booth for the Kremer Foundation at an education fair, applied for assistance and received it.

It was a spark that inspired other school administrators to seek help.

To date, the Kremer Foundation has given \$776,647 to six Catholic schools in the Diocese of Des Moines to help families pay for a faith-based education for their children.

"We're appreciative that the Kremer Foundation is investing in children," St. Anthony School Principal Raes said.

For the first time, St. Patrick School in Perry will receive \$10,000 this academic year, giving 10 students \$1,000 in tuition assistance.

"St. Patrick in Perry just got added because they had a compelling profile application that they sent in and we thought they were the kind of school that our foundation could make a difference in," Goddard said.

Principal Kandace Pattillo said her school used metrics from the Catholic Tuition Organization to help determine which students needed the assistance.

The philanthropy of the Kremers is an example of how one can leave a legacy that helps others.

The Kremer Foundation has given out more than \$70 million in tuition grants and the principle of the trust continues to grow.

"It's perpetual," Goddard said. "It will go on beyond all of us."

Tuition grants

The following schools have received tuition grants from the Kremer Foundation.

Christ the King School	5 years	\$50,000
Holy Family School	17 years	\$162,150
St. Anthony School	23 years	\$211,750
St. Joseph Elementary	21 years	\$192,432
St. Patrick School	1 year	\$10,000
St. Pius X School	16 years	\$150,315
TOTAL		\$776,647

This includes tuition grants of \$10,000 each for the six schools for this school year that will help pay the tuition for 95 children.

How to support local students with Catholic education

Individuals and families can help children who qualify for tuition assistance by donating to the Catholic Tuition Organization. The CTO collects donations and distributes them to students in the Diocese's 16 schools who qualify. For more information go to CTOIowa.org or call 515-237-5010.

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Diocese welcomes three new seminarians

As they enter the seminary for the first time, these young men share what made them decide to take the next step in discerning their vocation.



By Greg Kinser
St. Anthony Parish, Des Moines

I have always been drawn to the religious life.

I was raised in a Christian (Protestant, not Catholic) home and my faith has always been at the heart of my life. For four years, I served as a missionary with Child Evangelism Fellowship. As things generally do, my faith evolved and matured as I did.

In my senior year of high school, my longtime best friend, Dominic, became interested in the Catholic faith. Together we made the decision to join RCIA and ever since our confirmation, we have felt at home in the Catholic Church.

Interestingly, I never really felt called to the priesthood until over a year after being confirmed into the Catholic Church. I studied graphic design at Iowa State University.

After my first year at Iowa State, I was working a landscaping job over the summer. One day, about halfway through the summer, I was in the middle of a very tedious task of pulling weeds. I had the whole area to myself and my mind began to wander. Something, almost like a voice, but more like a thought, although not exactly my own thought, appeared: "You should be a priest."

I was confused, yet I was filled with a deep peace. I brought the idea of priesthood up to my family and closest friends and received their understanding and full support. That peace that I felt while pulling weeds has remained with me and only deepened to this day, over three years later.



By Luke Mohan
St. Francis of Assisi, West Des Moines

I attended grade school at my home parish of St. Francis of Assisi before going on to Dowling Catholic High School and eventually earning a Bachelor of Arts in Physics from Grinnell College.

I am now attending St. Paul Seminary for two years of pre-theology.

While I was raised Catholic, being a priest never seriously crossed my mind until my sophomore year of college. I was considering changing majors and career paths and for some reason I thought, "You should consider whether you are called to the priesthood."

At first, I hoped this "consideration" would lead to crossing the priesthood off a list of possible life paths.

This did not happen, and the more I prayed and considered what might be God's will for me, the more interior peace I felt about being a priest (despite a bit of exterior anxiety).

Around this time I began attending the Traditional Latin Mass, which both deepened my faith in general and really awakened me to the gravity of the priesthood.

When this feeling of peace did not go away, I resolved to enter seminary and continue my discernment there. Please, in your charity, pray for my fellow seminarians and me as we discern if God wills us to be priests.



By Blake Riffel
St. Francis of Assisi Parish, West Des Moines

Growing up, I had a strong desire to live a meaningful and purposeful life. For most of my life, that looked like becoming a husband and father, staying engaged with parish life through a lifetime of discipleship, and pursuing a career in electrical engineering.

Through many ups and downs, the Lord started planting seeds in my heart – and scattering them through the lips of those around me – that perhaps he was calling me to reconsider what I was previously so certain of.

For quite a while, I tried to satisfy that interior unrest through more engagement and ministry opportunities in the parish and across the Diocese, job changes, the list goes on and on.

When I finally realized I had been planning and scheming my own way through my vocation discernment without honestly inviting the Lord to shepherd me in this journey, I was slowly opened to the idea that the Lord was calling me to seriously discern the priesthood. Previously insurmountable walls in my heart started to be removed.

The Lord has been exceptionally consoling on my vocation journey so far, and I am grateful for all the works that he continues in my heart and in my life.

Iowa seminarians gather for prayer, discussion before heading back to school

By Anne Marie Cox
Staff Writer

Seminarians from all four Iowa dioceses met in early August to discuss how to address issues related to chastity for their own benefit and as future clergy who will be helping others.

Their gathering was part of an annual statewide convocation sponsored by the Iowa Knights of Columbus that gives them an opportunity to get to know each other.

Catholics live in a culture that is hypersexualized and that can create addictions and unhealthy habits, said keynote speaker Father Sean Kilcawley, of the Diocese of Lincoln, Nebraska. He serves his diocese's Office of Family Life and is an adviser for IntegrityRestored.com, a non-profit that seeks to help heal families affected by pornography.

Sixty percent of Christian men seek out pornography at least monthly, he said.

"So that means 60 percent of the men in church are not

living a life that's congruent with the faith," he added.

Young people, between the ages of eight and 11 are being exposed to pornography, Father Kilcawley said.

"We need to be able to address things directly and competently in a way that gives people hope that their life can change," he said.

"Freedom is possible and I hope that, in their formation, (the seminarians) know that they're encouraged to do whatever they need to do to be free but more than that, they're equipped to give that same encouragement to the people they serve," he said.

Des Moines seminarian, Deacon Nick Smith, said Father Kilcawley's discussion was helpful.

"He's been talking about, for us as seminarians, how we can help be better ministers to those who struggle with the virtue of chastity," said Deacon Smith. "I'm taking a lot from it from a pastoral point of view: How I can be a better confessor and priest for those who might struggle with



Seminarian Stan Asjes

that virtue and are trying to progress with that."

"I think it speaks to the challenges people go through," said Dubuque Archdiocesan seminarian Thiet Hoang. "It's a good reflection for us to reassess ourselves."

The discussion was threaded with hope, said Dubuque Archdiocesan seminarian JC



Photos by Kelly Mescher Collins

Seminarians Dominic Nguyen and Connor Lynch

Yiga.

"The whole spiritual life is a battle, right? You want people to have hope that they're never

stuck in a particular sin. God's mercy is always there," Yiga said. "While it is a battle out there, the mercy of God is always strong."

Sisters celebrate decades of dedicated service

The following sisters of the Congregation of the Humility of Mary celebrate jubilees this year. Cards may be sent in care of the Sister, to Humility of Mary Center, 820 W. Central Park Ave., Davenport, Iowa 52804.

75 YEARS

Sister Miriam Anstey

A native of Cumberland, in the central part of the Diocese of Des Moines, Sister Miriam Anstey entered the Congregation of the Humility of Mary in 1946 and made her first profession in 1949.

Her ministry in music education saw her in the Iowa schools of St. Alphonsus in Davenport, St. Theresa in Des Moines (1958-59), Gehlen in Lamars and St. Joseph School in Fort Madison. She taught in Minneapolis, served in leadership at the former Marycrest College in Davenport, served in California and in leadership at Emerson College in Boston.

Sister Miriam was the director at the Humility of Mary Center and was the music director of St. Anthony Parish in Davenport.

After retirement, Sister Miriam spent many years volunteering for inner city ministries in Davenport. She currently lives in Davenport and is active in a ministry of prayer and witness.



70 YEARS

Sister Regina Mary Cratty

Born in Des Moines in 1933, Sister Regina Mary Cratty entered the Congregation of the Humility of Mary in 1951 and made her first profession in 1954. Her ministry of teaching found her in Iowa at St. Anthony in Des Moines (1954-60), Sacred Heart in West Des Moines (1965-68), St. Mary Parish in Oskaloosa, Sacred Heart School in Davenport and Lourdes Memorial School in Bettendorf. She also

taught in Montana. She was also coordinator of the House of Prayer in Davenport. Sister Regina Mary currently lives at Humility of Mary Center in Davenport and is active in a ministry of prayer and witness.



Sister Harriet Ping

Sister Harriett Ping (M. St. Edward) was born in 1932 in Fort Madison, Iowa. She entered the Congregation of the Humility of Mary in 1951 making her first vows in 1954.

She taught in Davenport, Ottumwa, LeMars, Marshalltown and Fort Madison. In the Diocese of Des Moines, she taught at St. Joseph in Dunlap (1961-64). She also taught in Montana. Sister Harriet was a librarian at Marycrest College and worked in administration at Martina Place Assis-

ed Living (1997-2002) in Johnston, Iowa.

After retirement, Sister Harriet enjoyed volunteering at Our Lady of the Prairie Retreat near Wheatland, Iowa. She lives at Bishop Drumm Retirement Center in Johnston, where she is active in a ministry of prayer and witness.



60 YEARS

Sister Sheila Seng

Born in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, in 1943 Sister Sheila Seng (M. Mark Gregory) entered the Congregation of the Humility of Mary in 1962 and made her first profession in 1964.

She taught at St. Joseph in Neola (1965-66) and St. Pius X (1966-68) in Des Moines. She also taught in Rock Island, Illinois, and both taught and served as assistant principal in Colorado Springs, Colorado. Sister Sheila continues to substitute teach in Colorado.



Sister Helen Strohm

A native of Keswick, Iowa, Sister Helen Strohm (M. Maurice) was born in 1932, entered the Congregation of the Humility of Mary in 1951 and made her first vows in 1954.

Her ministry of teaching took her to Davenport, Marshalltown, Ottumwa and St. Donatus. In the Diocese of Des Moines, she taught at Assumption Grade School in Granger (1977-78), Christ the King (1978-79), St. Anthony and Holy Trinity in Des Moines (1978-86).

She helped create the volunteer program Seeds of Hope while in Des Moines (1983-84).

She also taught in Minneapolis and in Mississippi. She was the director of the YES Program in Canton, Mississippi and a pastoral minister at St. Joseph Church in North English, Iowa. She was director of the Rainbow Literacy Center and worked for the MADCAAP Educational Program in Canton.

Sister Helen currently lives in Mississippi.



25 YEARS

Barb Goss is celebrating 25 years as a CHM associate.

She was born in Cascade, Iowa, and has been a CHM associate since 1996.

She was previously a vowed member of the Dubuque Franciscan community. Later she built relationships with Humility sisters and became an associate.

Goss has a background in teaching, pastoral ministry and dedication to social justice and people in need. Currently she is a Humility staff member at Bishop Drumm Retirement Center in Johnston, Iowa.



Hispanic parish festival draws crowd



Photo by Anne Marie Cox

Business was hopping at the pupusa tent at the annual Jamaica festival at Our Lady of the Americas Parish on Sept. 12. Pupusas, a favorite dish in El Salvador, were available along with tacos, carnitas, mole poblano, carne asada and more.

Come and See weekend

Are you – or is someone you know – a single Catholic woman, age 19 to 35, contemplating God's call in your life?

The Adrian Dominican Sisters invite you to a weekend of discernment. Come and see for yourself if God could be calling you to life as a Dominican Sister.

The Come and See weekend is Oct. 8-10, at Weber Retreat and Conference Center on the Adrian Dominican Sisters' Motherhouse Campus in Adrian, Michigan. The weekend offers you the opportunity to meet other women discerning God's call; join the Adrian Dominican Sisters for Sunday liturgy; spend time in prayer, reflection, silence, sharing, and fun.

There is no charge. You are our guest. Please register online at <https://tinyurl.com/ADSDiscern>. For more information, contact Sister Katherine Frazier, OP, at vocations@adriandominicans.org.

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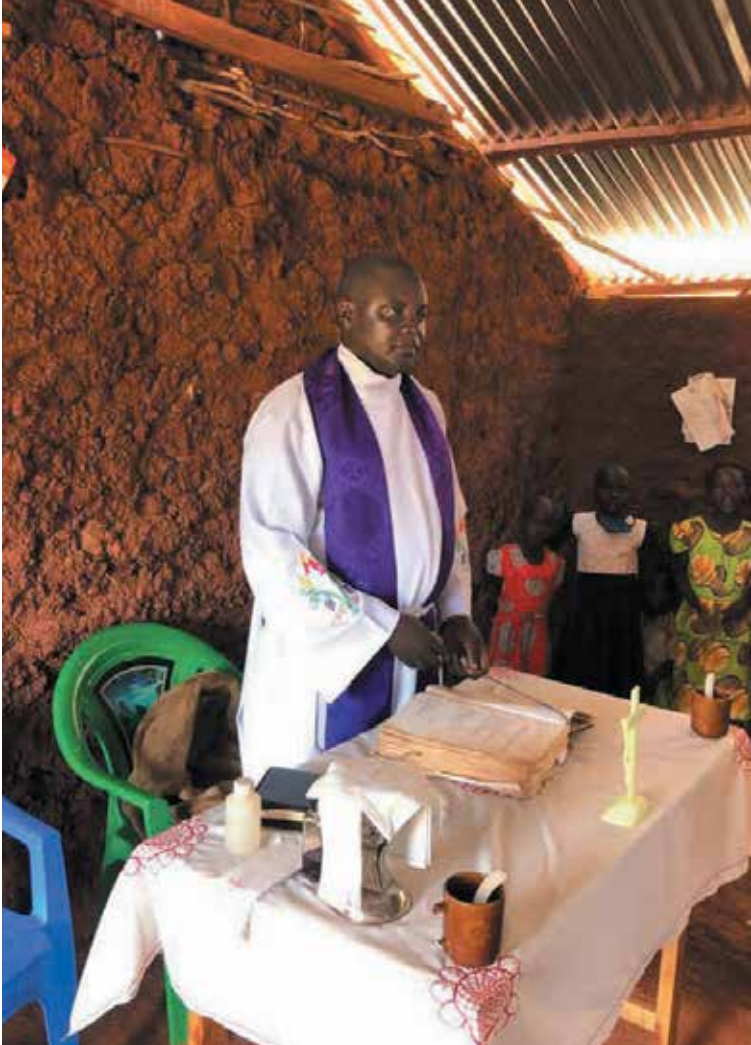
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Cleaning of parish closets benefits parishes in Kenya

“It’s amazing to realize how much good can be done with so little effort,” said Steve Gruba, M.D., a parishioner of St. Patrick Parish in Corning.



Top: Father Eliud Mwenda, in Father Lazarus Kirigia’s home Diocese in Kenya, celebrates Mass at one of his churches. Right: Father Lazarus Kirigia and Steve Gruba, M.D., show the packages of donated church vessels and vestments that were heading to a parish in Kenya.

MEMORIAL MASS

FOR THE UNBORN

A Memorial Mass for all the lives lost through the violence of abortion. Together we will plead to the Lord to stop the evil of abortion.

SEPTEMBER 25, 2021

Diocesan Shrine of Our Lady of Mount Carmel & Divine Mercy

GROTTO

NOON
ST. ANTHONY CATHOLIC CHURCH

Join us for this important Memorial Mass to remember and pray for the millions of babies whose lives were lost through abortion. At this Mass, we will pray for the unborn and for the women and men suffering from the tragic effects of abortion. The Mass will be held at the Grotto, just north of St. Anthony Church. Chairs will be set up but feel free to bring your own in case they are filled up. All are invited, please bring everyone to join in this important Mass. More information contact Tom Hanson tehanson4@msn.com 515.770.7648
If the weather is bad, the Mass will be moved into the church.

Sponsored by Knights of Columbus Council 12482

A call for donated vessels and vestments for a poor church in Kenya went out to central and southwest Iowa.

The response was overwhelming.

Parishes in the Des Moines Diocese donated 18 chalices, 6 ciborium, 95 chasubles, 3 crucifixes, dozens of altar clothes and church banners, boxes of candles, a computer and an iPad.

In addition, the Anita Library donated children’s books for a Kenyan orphanage.

“It’s amazing to realize how much good can be done with so little effort,” said Steve Gruba, M.D., a parishioner of St. Patrick Parish in Corning.

The donations came about through a friendship Gruba had developed with his former pastor, Father Lazarus Kirigia, who is from Kenya. Father Kirigia now serves St. Mary Parish in Red Oak and St. Patrick Parish in Imogene.

“Before the COVID-19 era, I used to make one or two trips to Kenya with a group of physicians and nursing students to hold medical camps,” Gruba said. There, he met Father Eliud Mwenda, a parish priest in the

Diocese of Meru, which is Father Kirigia’s home diocese.

Gruba received pictures from Father Mwenda. The priest was showing the crowd in his church. Built for 20 families, he served 80 families every Sunday. He mentioned that his diocese was poor and they could not provide newly ordained priests their own chalice.

Gruba talked with Father Kirigia about how they might help. Father Kirigia asked for and received permission from Des Moines Bishop William Joensen to invite parishes in central and southwest Iowa to make a donation of items they no longer needed.

“Diocesan priests cleaned out their parish closets of anything useful for building up the Church in Kenya,” said Gruba. His brother-in-law made candle holders to replace the broke coffee mugs that were being used.

The donations “are now on their way via ocean container shipping to find new life in enhancing the worship service in humble churches in Kenya,” Gruba said. “Who knew that cleaning out the closet would have such a great impact?”

We’re looking for stories of inspiration!

Send your ideas to Kelly Mescher Collins at kcollins@dmdiocese.org or call 515-237-5054.

Wisdom comes in waiting

I consider myself a fairly patient person, but I have to admit I was on the edge recently as I sat at my kitchen table with my son while assisting with his math homework. He's in fourth grade, and it was hard to tell who was more frustrated, him with the math, or me with the math-teaching.

I was often tempted to do the problems for him, or immediately give him the answers, but I also knew that I had to give him the space to wrestle with the work, and even suffer the fog of confusion before the answers would come. There's no path to math proficiency other than the gauntlet of multiplication tables and long division, and that fact got me thinking about our faith.

I'm a cradle Catholic, and over

Marriage and Family Life

By Adam Storey



the years there have been plenty of times when I've felt just as frustrated and confused in faith as Gabriel seemed doing his homework. And rarely do answers to questions of faith come at the end of a worksheet – usually it's more like months, or even years. Sometimes it feels like they may never come. I've felt that frustration personally, and there have also been times where I've walked with a loved one

through their own experience of doubt or desolation.

Just as I was tempted to give my son the answers, I think we often find ourselves wanting to just skip over these periods of desolation and find a solution! We can become frustrated and wonder why God doesn't just solve the problem, or clear up the confusion. In a culture that promises quick fixes, it can often be tempting to find solutions outside of the faith. If God seems silent, well then there is no shortage of others who are quite vocal, and often willing to provide the answers I want.

Yet, our tradition teaches us that wisdom comes in waiting, and when we are willing to forgo easy answers we can often find truer ones. In scripture, God challeng-

es the prophet Habakkuk, who is lamenting the long suffering plight of Judah, when he says that his answer will come "at the appointed time" and "if it delays, wait for it, it will surely come, it will not be late" (Habakkuk 2:3).

In my son's frustration with math, and my own frustration in accompaniment, I was reminded that we all could use a little more of Habakkuk's wisdom, which includes a willingness to ask the hard questions, but also a willingness to patiently wait and seek God's answers.

Adam Storey is the diocesan director of Marriage & Family Life. He can be reached at astorey@dmdiocese.org or 515-237-5056.

Faith: The ultimate opinion

Let's Get Psyched

By Deacon Randy Kiel



ate and with caution. This is part of the art of communication. Life is the result of a supremely and divinely orchestrated plan called creation, which is absolutely and understandably much more than facts and opinions. God, the author and creator of life, expresses life through beauty and misery, complexity and simplicity, metaphor and simile, abstract and concrete, history and future.

Where would the world be without opinions? Everyone might have the same thoughts and feelings or might even act in the same ways. Without opinions, we would eliminate the need to get to know one another as we know it and at the level that is familiar to us. Opinions open channels of communication through which humans form both casual and intimate relationships.

Not only should we be careful when expressing our opinions, but even how we use the word opinion itself. For example: if we say to a person, "Well, that's

just your opinion" then we might be minimizing, belittling, or shaming them. Alternatively, we might state, "Well, that's just my opinion" where we might be using our opinion to cover up personal insecurities and arrogance. Both the word opinion as well as opinions themselves can either provide opportunities to grow with or to hurt others. As psychology sees it, an opinion is a collection of thoughts based on personal history, perception, and information attained that form a judgment or assessment on any matter. While an opinion is not a factual statement, it may or may not contain a fact within it or have a factual reference.

These collected thoughts, known as opinions, are part of what makes the human species different than anything else created. Another difference is that we humans, can form beliefs called dogmas. So then, what is the difference between opinion and dogma in our daily lives?

In the Christian tradition, dogma means a belief communicated by divine revelation and defined by the Church. For example: the four Marian dogmas of Mother of God, Immaculate Conception, Perpetual Virginity, and Assumption form the basis of the dogma called Mariology. These dogmatic beliefs transcend generations and are able to survive cultural and societal changes with no need to be questioned.

However, when an opinion is presented as a dogmatic belief, one might encounter dogmatism.

Dogmatism is the strong presentation of an attitude or opinion that gives the impression that the opinions are fact. When there is a personal intensity of conviction and sense of absolute resoluteness, there is a risk of dogmatism. We need to be cautious of such proclamations.

So now we can begin to see the human struggle. Let us all be charitable in the ways we express our opinions and resist dogmatism. Each of us needs to make choices to use both opinion and dogma as sources of growth, goodness, and faith.

Faith is the ultimate opinion which is substantiated by Christian dogma. God blessed us with the ability to freely choose to follow Him with this faith by personal choice.

Lord, since You are the source of all our Christian dogma, may Your wisdom be the foundation of all our opinions. Amen.

Deacon Randy Kiel is the founder of Kardiac Counseling and serves Holy Trinity Parish in Des Moines. To connect with him, email randy@kardiaccounseling.com.

Suicide does not discriminate

Guest Column

By Mary Thompson



vices that use proven evidence-based treatments and support are available.

If you or someone you know is experiencing an emotional crisis or thoughts of suicide, no-cost 24/7 confidential support and crisis resources are available:

- 2-1-1 – dial 2-1-1 for crisis help or service referrals
- Your Life Iowa – Call 1-855-581-8111 or text to 1-855-895-8398
- National Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-TALK (8255) or via chat from www.suicidepreventionlifeline.org
- Crisis Text Line – text HELLO to 741741 to connect with a crisis counselor.

Additional resources:

- Trevor Lifeline, the only national 24/7 lifeline for LGBTQ youth: call 1-866-488-7386
- Veterans Crisis Line, for U.S. military veterans: call 1-800-273-8255, press 1.

Recent events demonstrate that no one is beyond the reach of mental health struggles.

Olympic athletes, musicians and fashion designers are not immune, and neither are you, your friends or your family members.

It's time we stop assuming who is and is not at risk, as these assumptions can cause us to disregard warning signs.

Just because someone seems to be doing well at their new job, we should not ignore the fact that they have stopped communicating with friends or pursuing their hobbies.

Just because someone appears happy/content in their social media photos, let's not ignore their increased substance use and social isolation.

A simple conversation can save a life

It's time to stop thinking certain people in our lives are above this epidemic, and time to start seeing everyone around us for what they are – humans. Humans with complex lives, potentially unknown traumas, and an equally important worth and value to the world.

Stop assuming, and start asking, "Is everything ok?"

A simple question and conversation can save a life.

Effective treatments and compassionate and knowledgeable mental health professionals are ready and waiting to help.

We all need to join together to educate ourselves, #BeThere for our loved ones, and take the suicide prevention fight beyond September and into our everyday lives.

Mary Thompson is the chief executive officer of Clive Behavioral Health.

September marks Suicide Prevention Awareness Month, and it provides us with an opportunity to rally around the common goal of preventing suicide in our communities.

The issues that divide us have received national headlines, but the issues that lead to death by suicide are ones that we must all face equally. No one is immune from depression, PTSD, substance use disorder, illness, job loss, or any of the myriad of risk factors that can lead someone to considering suicide.

To help end this epidemic, we must put aside our preconceived assumptions and biases about suicide and the people who may be at risk.

Help is available

As a trusted local behavioral healthcare provider, our team at Clive Behavioral Health is dedicated to changing the national narrative about suicide in a manner that promotes hope, resiliency, equality and recovery. Mental health ser-

The hidden power of play; how to be young at heart

Every fall the push to do more intensifies. Sharpen your pencil and dig in. Produce more, study more, socialize more, exercise more, volunteer more.

But we are forgetting something. The very thing we consider the opposite of productivity – play – is, in fact, an accelerator of it. And more importantly, it is central in the Christian path to wellness.

I was reminded of this when I read about Reform, a Catholic wellness practice based in Islip, N.Y. with online programming. Their skilled team includes nutritionists, a priest and a doctor. And in their wisdom, they declared play one of the nine pillars of wellness, right alongside sleep, movement, community and faith.

No pillar is more important than the other, and each one enhances the other – movement helps with a good night's sleep, a good night's sleep allows for

Twentysomething



By Christina Capecchi

greater community involvement and so on. Play is the most overlooked pillar, dismissed as a matter reserved for kids – something you graduate from around the time you abandon stuffed animals and mac and cheese.

“But if we take life seriously all the time,” the Reform team writes on its blog, “we miss what God calls us to be: childlike. As his children, we were all

designed for play – no matter our age.”

What a profound statement! As God's children, we are designed for play. At 7 or 70.

Play keeps us young at heart, a fact my mom ably demonstrates at 65. She is not the grandma parked on the bench. She's the one who hula hoops. She goes down slides with her grandkids and encourages them to play in the rain, pulling out her own rain boots to jump in puddles.

She is inspired by her faith. Her mantra comes from St. Irenaeus: “The glory of God is man fully alive.”

For my mom, play unlocks her creativity. “It takes me out my world,” she said.

Indeed, play is the brain's favorite way of learning, and to ditch it at adulthood is to dramatically limit your intellectual

growth.

My friend Stephanie enrolled in a Reform program to help process the death of her 18-month-old. Learning to embrace play has been a surprising step forward in her long journey with grief.

This summer Steph played with her kids – running through the splash pad with them, baking, going on one-on-one dates. She also pledged to take up a hobby of her own.

As I write, a thunderstorm is rustling through, dimming the streets. It shifts me into a state of observing. I can step away from the to-do list. I don't have to outrun the clock. I can simply let autumn unfold. And if I find a good leaf pile, I will jump.

Christina Capecchi is a freelance writer from Inver Grove Heights, Minn.

Under a bridge in Austin

Guest Column



By Father Ron Rolheiser

Recently at a workshop, a woman shared her anxiety about the death of her brother. Her older brother had died from the COVID-19 virus before there were vaccines for it, and had died because he had dangerously exposed himself to catching the virus. However, he had exposed himself to that danger for a worthy reason. A military veteran, living alone, he used much of his salary and savings to cook meals and take them to feed homeless people living under a bridge in his hometown, Austin, Texas.

That certainly seems like a noble, Christian death, except that in his adult life he had lost any explicit faith in God and in Jesus, and self-defined as an agnostic (though with no antipathy towards religion). He simply didn't believe in God or go to church anymore. His sister who shared this story, loved him deeply, admired his feeding the homeless, but worried about his dying outside of an explicit faith and the church. Her anxiety was compounded by her other brother, a Christian fundamentalist, who is firm in the belief that dying outside of the church puts one eternally outside of salvation; in brief, you end up in hell. At a gut-level, his sister knew that this could not be true. Still she was anxious about it and wanted some assurances that her fundamentalist brother was wrong and that her anxiety about her brother's eternal salvation was a false fear.

What does one say in the face of that? A number of things might be said. First, that the God who Jesus incarnated and revealed is a God who is in every way the antithesis of fundamentalism and of this sort of false fear about salvation. Jesus assures us that God reads the heart in all its complexity, including its existential complexity. A fundamentalist reads only a written rubric, not the goodness of a heart. As well, scripture describes God as ‘a jealous God’. This doesn't mean God gets jealous and angry when we are preoccupied with our own things or when we betray God through weakness and sin. Rather, it means that God, like a solicitous parent, never wants to lose us and seeks every possible means to keep us from slipping away and hurting ourselves. Moreover, in the abstract language of academic theology, God has a universal will for salvation, and that means for everyone, including agnostics and atheists.

More specifically, Jesus gives us

three interpenetrating perspectives that expose the narrowness of all fundamentalist thinking regarding who goes to heaven and who goes to hell.

First, he gives us a parable of a man who has two sons and he asks them both to work in his field. The first son says that he will not do it, but in fact ends up doing it; the second son says he will do the work, but ends up not doing it. Which is the true son? The answer is obvious, but Jesus reinforces the parable with this comment: It is not necessarily those who say ‘Lord, Lord’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but those who do the will of God on earth.

What this parable highlights is what theologians (from John Henry Newman through Karl Rahner) have tried to teach, namely, that someone can have a notional faith that in fact rings hollow in the light of true faith. Conversely, someone can explicitly deny what we hold in our notion of faith and yet in the light of what a genuine faith demands, have real faith since this is not necessarily manifest in one's notion of faith but in the fruits of one's life.

As well, we have Jesus' shocking warning in Matthew 25 about how we ultimately will be judged for heaven or hell, namely, on whether or not we served the poor. This warning does not suggest that explicit faith and church attendance are of no consequence; they have their importance, but it is warning that there are things that are more important.

Finally, and perhaps most far-reaching in this regard, Jesus gives us the power to bind and loose. As parts of the Body of Christ, our love, like Jesus' love, keeps a loved one connected to the community of salvation. As Gabriel Marcel puts it, to love someone is to say, you can never be lost. This woman's love for her brother assures that he is not in hell.

All of this I might have said, but instead I simply referred to a wonderful quote from Charles Peguy the noted French poet and essayist. Peguy once suggested that when we die and appear before God, each of us will be asked this one question: “Where are the others?” (“Ou sont les autres?”).

I assured the anxious woman she need not worry about her brother's eternal salvation, despite his dying outside of an explicit faith and the church. When he stood before God and was asked the question (Where are the others?) he had a very good answer: They are under a bridge in Austin.

Oblate Father Ron Rolheiser is a theologian, teacher, and award-winning author. He can be contacted through his website



I've Been Wondering...

Father John Ludwig

Q. I would like to know about man-made laws vs. rules in the Bible.

A. THE SCRIPTURES are a collection of writings that took place over the course of hundreds of years. The writings in the New Testament cover a much shorter period of time, probably less than 80-90 years. There are all kinds of literature in the Bible: songs, letters, histories, poetry, gospels, and, of course, laws. The Ten Commandments gives us one example of laws. There are also the two great commandments: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.”

In the gospel, Jesus quotes this saying from the book of Deuteronomy. There are some rules or laws in the Old Testament that we dismiss: the eating of pork or shellfish and the stoning of adulterers – Jesus says the one without sin should cast the first stone – that means no one.

Both in the Church and in civil society, laws are made to establish good order and to protect rights and obligations. Some laws are very important: forbidding murder; others are much less significant: parking tickets for overtime parking. The Church has a Code of Canon Law that was promulgated in 1917 by Pope Benedict XV, later completely revised and updated by Pope John Paul II in 1983. Up until 1917, there were many Church laws, but they were organized and codified by the 1917 Code.

Q. Where did women come from? Adam and Eve had two sons. I don't recall that Adam and Eve had girls too.
– Tony, Norwalk

A. THE STORY of the first man and the first woman (whom we have come to refer to as Adam and Eve) is not meant to be taken in a literal way. If it were, who would have been around to write about it?

Rather, the story (one of two creation stories in the book of Genesis) gives us a preview of the goodness of God and all of creation. Human beings, we believe, are made in the image and likeness of God. So the writer of this story in Genesis shouldn't be seen as an early version of Ancestry.com. Rather, it's a wonderful story of how God want-

ed things to be – a kind of paradise on earth, a paradise that people couldn't quite live up to. Even today, we know that humans can get in the way of God's original plan. I suggest that we might read the first few chapters of Genesis, in such a way that the stories will fill us with wonder at all that God has done.

Q. What are the Gnostic gospels and is it permissible for Catholics to read and discuss these? – Maryellyn

A. THE WORD “GOSPEL” in English comes from an earlier word “godspel” meaning good news. The Church officially recognizes four gospels as inspired: Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. There were other gospels that were not recognized in the same way.

Sometimes these gospels are referred to as apocryphal gospels. Gnosticism is a system of belief according to which salvation depends on a singular knowledge or inner enlightenment about God. So, Gnostics suggest that there is a special insight that they have (and which other people don't have) that leads to salvation. The Church has rejected this approach. Unless a person is doing serious scriptural study, none of these gospels will be very helpful. For the ordinary Christian, the four gospels are more than enough inspiration to be good followers of Jesus.

Q. Could you please explain what the last sentence in the “Glory Be” prayer means? “As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.”

A. IT'S A PRAYER OF PRAISE to God using the formula for the Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The last sentence means that God is glorified from before the beginning of time until forever. The Latin text “sicut erat in principio, et nunc, et semper, et in saecula saeculorum.” Literally: “as it was at the start, and now, and always, and in all ages of ages.” Check out: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unto_the_ages_of_ages.

Do you have a question for Father John Ludwig? Send it to communications@dmdiocese.org, or mail it to The Catholic Mirror, Diocese of Des Moines, 601 Grand Ave., Des Moines, Iowa 50309.

Pope: Christians must learn to serve, not be served

Continued from page 1

Prime Minister Viktor Orbán and Semjén for roughly 40 minutes “in a cordial atmosphere.”

“Among the various topics discussed were the role of the church in the country, the commitment to the protection of the environment, the protection and promotion of the family,” the Vatican said.

In a statement on his Facebook page, Orbán, who views migration as a threat to Europe’s Christian identity, said, “I asked Pope Francis not to let Christian Hungary perish.”

Pope Francis, arriving in his popemobile, was greeted warmly by thousands who lined the street leading toward the Mass site in Heroes’ Square.

In the homily, Pope Francis reflected on the Sunday Gospel reading, in which Jesus asks his disciples, “Who do you say that I am?”

Jesus, he said, addresses the same question to Christians today and requires a response that is “more than a quick answer straight out the catechism.”

The first step in responding to Jesus’ question, he explained, is to proclaim Jesus as Lord. However, the pope recalled that Jesus told his disciples to “tell no one about him.”

“There was a very good reason: to call Jesus the Christ the Messiah is correct, but incomplete. There is always the risk of proclaiming a false messianism,

one of human origins, not from God,” he said.

Nevertheless, to proclaim Christ means also proclaiming his death on the cross, and the Eucharist serves as a reminder of God “as bread broken, as love crucified and bestowed.”

Like Peter, who was scandalized at Christ’s announcement of the suffering he must endure, Christians can also “be blinded by that way of thinking.”

“We, too, can take the Lord ‘aside,’ shove him into a corner of our heart and continue to think of ourselves as religious and respectable, going our own way without letting ourselves be affected by Jesus’ way of thinking,” the pope said.

Lastly, Christians must learn to “walk behind Jesus,” because Christianity is not “a race toward success” but to find true freedom in “not needing to be the center of everything.”

In doing so, Pope Francis said Christians can learn to follow in the footsteps of Christ, “who came to serve and not be served.”

“The Eucharist impels us to this encounter, to the realization that we are one body, to the willingness to let ourselves be broken for others,” the pope said. Prior to celebrating the closing Mass, Pope Francis met in private with the country’s bishops. He then met with Hungary’s Ecumenical Council of Churches, along with several Jewish communities. Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew of Constantinople



CNS photo/Paul Haring

Pope Francis greets the crowd as he arrives to celebrate the closing Mass of the International Eucharistic Congress at Heroes’ Square in Budapest, Hungary, Sept. 12. Also pictured in the popemobile is Cardinal Péter Erdo of Esztergom-Budapest.

was among those at the Mass and the meeting with religious leaders.

Noting the recent celebration of Rosh Hashanah and the Sept. 15-16 observance of Yom Kippur, Pope Francis offered best wishes and expressed his appreciation for the Jewish communities’ efforts to break down the walls that separated Jews and Christians in the past.

Just as God “transformed the desert into a highway to the Promised Land, so he wishes to

bring us out of the barren deserts of bitterness and indifference, to that land of fellowship for which we long,” the pope said.

Drawing a parallel on the famed Széchenyi Chain Bridge, which links the eastern and western sides of Budapest, the pope noted that the bridge “does not fuse those two parts together, but rather holds them together.”

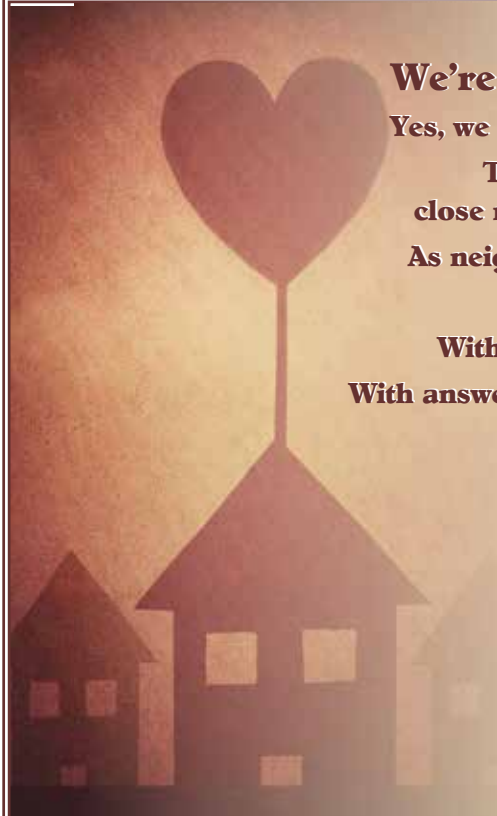
“That is how it should be with us, too. Whenever we were tempted to absorb the other, we were tearing down instead of building up. Or when we tried to ghettoize others instead of including them,” the pope said.

“How often has this

happened throughout history,” he added. “We must be vigilant and pray that it never happens again.”

Lamenting “the threat of anti-Semitism still lurking in Europe and elsewhere,” Pope Francis said the best way to defuse hatred is “to work together positively and to promote fraternity.”

“The bridge has yet another lesson to teach us,” he said. “It is supported by great chains made up of many rings. We are those rings, and each of us is essential to the chain. We can no longer live apart, without making an effort to know one another, prey to suspicion and conflict.”



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After warm welcome to Slovakia, pope encourages Christian leaders to unite

BRATISLAVA, Slovakia (CNS) -- Hundreds of men, women and children gathered on the tarmac of Bratislava international airport Sept. 12 to welcome Pope Francis for a visit of less than 72 hours.

As Pope Francis made his way down the steps of the plane, the crowd, some of whom were dressed in traditional Slovak clothing, waved yellow and white flags and cheered. Two children presented him with bread and salt, a traditional gift presented to honored guests.

Slovak President Zuzana Caputová greeted Pope Francis, who arrived in the country from Budapest, Hungary, where he met with religious and government leaders and celebrated the closing Mass of the International Eucharistic Congress.

After his arrival in Bratislava, the pope was whisked away to the apostolic nunciature, where he met with ecumenical leaders and reflected on the freedom shared in the country “after years of atheistic persecution, when religious freedom was stifled or harshly repressed.”

He warned them against “the temptation to return to bondage, not that of a regime, but one even worse: an interior bondage.” The pope explained that often, when one feels that “things have quieted down” and settle into the hope “of a peaceful and tranquil life,” the goal is no longer freedom but instead in “the staking out of spaces and privileges, which as far as the Gospel is concerned, are bread and little else.”

“Let us not be concerned only with the things that can benefit our individual communities,” the pope said. “The freedom of our brothers and sisters is also our freedom, since our freedom is not complete without theirs.”

Consejero sobre Asistencia de Víctimas

El Consejero sobre Asistencia de Víctimas es un empleado de Polk County Victim Services. Ella ayuda a víctimas de abuso sexual por parte del clero durante el proceso de la queja y buscando servicios de apoyo y consejería. Pueden comunicarse al 515-286-2028 o en advocate@dmdiocese.org.

New global initiative seeks to ‘unlock’ Catechism of the Catholic Church

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- When is the last time you cracked open the Catechism of the Catholic Church?

Odds are, it’s sitting on your bookshelf collecting dust.

A new global project, Real + True, seeks to “unlock” the catechism and modernize the way church teaching is presented to a digital age.

The catechism “is not just a technical book,” said Real True co-founder Edmund Mitchell, “but it’s written to really change our relationship with Christ.”

Launched Sept. 7, the initiative includes videos, social media content and a podcast organized along the four pillars of the catechism.

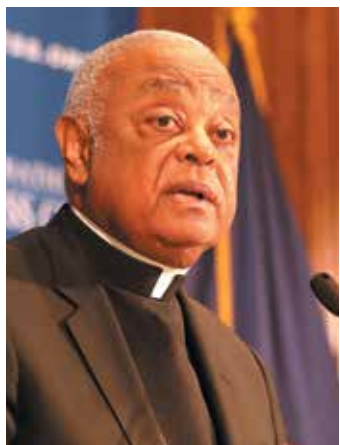
Each month a new unit will be released, with 12 units for each pillar, totaling 48 units. Aimed at millennial and Generation Z audiences, the content is meant to supplement evangelization and catechesis efforts that already exist as well as be a resource to those seeking answers to questions online, said co-founder Edmundo Reyes.

The material is free and available on realtrue.org in English, Spanish, Portuguese and French.

At National Press Club, Cardinal Gregory praises, challenges media

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- In his first appearance at the National Press Club as archbishop of Washington, Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory on Sept. 8 emphasized the importance of protecting the environment and upholding the dignity of human life at all stages.

He also answered questions on issues ranging from whether women will ever be ordained Catholic priests -- “I don’t see it changing” -- to affirming that seeking healing for victims of clergy sexual abuse should be the first priority.



CNS photo/Andrew Biraj, Catholic Standard Washington Cardinal Wilton D. Gregory

Cardinal Gregory took questions from the moderator and the press club’s president, Lisa Nicole Matthews of The Associated Press, for more than half an hour, following prepared remarks that thanked the news media for their work keeping the world “informed, updated and connected as a global community.”

He noted that “words have the incredible power and ability to build, to damage or destroy” and he challenged the news industry and all people “to use our daily words, social media posts, public commentary and personal involvement to care for our neighbors in tangible ways that work for justice at every level.”

He said “civility and respectful dialogue for the purpose of earnest understanding can and should be promoted, most especially when we hold different or even opposing political, religious or other opinions.”

Texas bisops highlight state-funded program to help pregnant women



CNS photo/Juan Guajardo, North Texas Catholic

Roxanna Young, executive director of the pro-life crisis pregnancy clinic, Flourishing Tree of Life, delivers baby items to a needy client May 12, 2020, outside of the facility in Aledo, Texas.

WASHINGTON (CNS) -- Amid heated discussion surrounding the new abortion law in Texas, which bans abortions from six weeks, Catholic bishops have emphasized the importance of a long-running state program to help pregnant women.

“Texas has invested hundreds of millions of dollars in programs for pregnant moms and families,” said a statement issued by the Texas Catholic Conference, two days after the new law went into effect.

The conference, which

is the public policy arm of the state’s Catholic bishops, was referring to the state-funded program Alternatives to Abortion, which started in 2005.

The program provides funds for pregnancy centers that offer counseling services and resources to women in crisis pregnancies.

As Pope Francis reminds us, our parishes must be ‘islands of mercy in the midst of a sea of indifference.’”

The state’s bishops also stressed that “everyone in the par-

ish should know where to refer a pregnant woman in need.” They said this work is also something that has been taken up on the national level with the initiative of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, Walking with Moms in Need, which helps pregnant women and mothers. On Sept. 9, the Justice Department sued the state of Texas for the new abortion ban, calling the state law unconstitutional. It is also seeking an injunction to prohibit the law’s enforcement.

Visión con los Ojos del Corazón

Continued from page 3

muchos de ustedes en persona en toda la Diócesis. Tengo algunas intuiciones y esperanzas sobre la forma de la visión que surgirá de este proceso. Aun así, reconozco humildemente que, si yo tuviera que prescribir anticipadamente las características principales de la visión, me arriesgaría a convertirme en cierto tipo de fariseo autonombrado que piensa que ya entiende por sí mismo los planes de Dios.

Todos tenemos nuestros respectivos sentidos sobre lo que significa ser un discípulo de Jesús y un miembro del cuerpo de Cristo en estos tiempos extraordinarios; a menos de que seamos lo suficientemente humildes para unir nuestras visiones personales y para colocarnos pacientemente bajo la tutela del Espíritu, cultivando la confianza y el deseo de hablar unos con otros desde nuestro corazón, vamos a perder el tiempo. Y nadie quiere hacer eso. Tenemos emocionantes

y sí, demandantes posibilidades frente a nosotros, gracias al Dios que nunca renuncia a nosotros. Dios no quiere que se desperdicie ninguna persona ni ninguna posibilidad de recibir al Verbo dotado del Espíritu que es su Hijo. Juntos, unidos en mente y corazón, espero que estemos inspirados, discernientes e incluso dispuestos a apoyar esta iniciativa en oración y en cualquier oportunidad que se nos dé para participar. La visión del Reino de Dios se manifiesta, llamándonos a asistirle en elaborar la comunión en donde se intercambia el amor, en donde la vida fluye en ambas direcciones con el pulso del Espíritu impulsándonos. Mantenemos verdadera fe con Cristo y unos con otros, con corazones que ven lo que Dios quiere que veamos, para que podamos ir a donde Dios quiere que vayamos.

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—Pope Francis

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